

Allocation of deep water blocks to ONGC

†2216. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Director General of Hydrocarbon has requested Government not to give the deep water blocks to ONGC;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons given by the Director General of Hydrocarbon for this above said request;

(d) whether the authenticity of these reasons has been verified; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (e) A total of 55 exploration blocks (24 deep-water, 6 shallow-water and 25 on-land) were offered under sixth round of NELP. A total of 36 foreign companies and 32 National companies including ONGC participated in bidding round. Evaluation of bids is carried out by adopting a transparent and quantitative bid evaluation criteria, which was made public in the Notice Inviting Offers for NELP-VI by the Government. The bid evaluation report in respect of 52 blocks has been received in this Ministry from the Directorate General of Hydrocarbon and the recommendations are presently under examination.

Smart Card Scheme

†2217. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering the implementation of a Smart Card Scheme in order to supply kerosene and LPG at subsidized rates to genuine beneficiaries;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Committee has given certain suggestions regarding Integrated Energy Policy;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the details regarding measures taken by Government to ensure the supply of the above items to the genuine beneficiaries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) With the objective of ensuring that the benefit of subsidy reaches the target consumers in an efficient and cost effective manner, and there is no discretion of subsidized PDS kerosene the Ministry has proposed introduction of 'smart card system' for distribution of PDS kerosene. The Scheme is proposed to be introduced initially as a pilot in three districts, namely Latur in Maharashtra, Nalanda in Bihar and Nainital in Uttaranchal in 2007. Under the scheme, Smart Cards will be issued to BPL Card holders only, while other Ration Card holders would be given non-subsidised kerosene. The beneficiaries will be identified by district authorities. There is no proposal to provide LPG through Smart Card Scheme at present. Further, the Government had constituted an inter-Ministerial Committee under Chairmanship of Dr. C Rangarajan, Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister to formulate a long term policy on pricing. The Committee submitted its report on 17.02.2006 and has *inter alia* recommended that subsidy on kerosene be restricted to BPL families only. The Government has accepted the recommendation in principle.

(b) and (c) Rangarajan Committee has not given any suggestions regarding integrated energy policy.

(d) The Government has in principle accepted the recommendation of the inter-Ministerial Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. C Rangarajan, Chairman Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister that subsidy on kerosene be restricted to BPL families only. The Government is implementing on experimental basis the Smart Card system for distribution of PDS kerosene in three districts initially. Besides, the Government has introduced a marker system which would help identify adulteration in PDS kerosene. As regards domestic LPG, this being a subsidized product, it requires monitoring to ensure that domestic LPG is not diverted for unauthorized use in automobiles or for commercial purposes. Government has advised oil companies to monitor dealerwise sales in order to check any misuse.